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October 6, 1999

USDA/FSIS Hearing Clerk  
300 12th Street, SW  
Room 102 Cotton Annex  
Washington, DC 20250-3700

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FSIS DOCKET ROOM  
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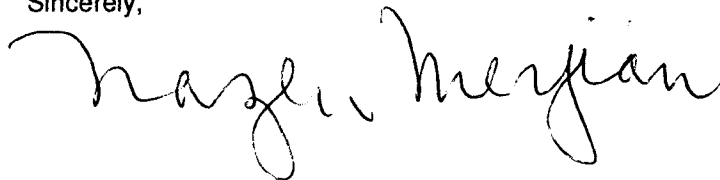
Re: USDA Docket No. 98-045N.

The standard molting procedure of starving birds for 10 to 14 days unavoidably stresses the birds. Their immune system is therefore suppressed and the flock's susceptibility to salmonella infection is increased.

We support banning forced molting as three fourths of Salmonella Enteritidis outbreaks are linked to eggs.

The President's Council on Food Safety seeks public input on ways to reduce foodborne illness in the nation's food supply. Banning forced molting on eggs is imperative in this endeavor.

Sincerely,



Nazen Merjian  
VFA